

COUNTRY Germany (Soviet Zone)

SECURITY INFORMATION

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REPORT NO.

TOPIC Briesen Airfield

EVALUATION see below

PLACE OBTAINED

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DATE OF CONTENT 3 to 26 August 1951 25X1

DATE OBTAINED

DATE PREPARED

26 September 1951

REFERENCES

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PAGES 3

ENCLOSURES (NO. & TYPE)

1 sketch on ditto

REMARKS

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SOURCE

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1. In August 1951, source learned from a construction worker who had worked at Briesen airfield that the installation was being enlarged. The runway of the field, which was scheduled to be 3,000 meters long, began at a point 500 meters east of the Brand railroad station. A stretch of 2,000 meters was concreted to a width of 80 meters. (1) Strips of turf about 50 meters wide were being laid on both sides of the E-W runway. A concrete lane about 10 meters wide was being built in an elliptical shape around the runway. Five brick buildings had been constructed south of the road to Krausnick. The field was scheduled to be completed by 15 September 1951. However, source believed that the scheduled completion date would not be met.

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2. On 10 August, about 2,000 civilian workers, 1,200 of whom were quartered in low wooden buildings at the field were engaged in construction. The E-W runway which was to be 3,000 meters long was being concreted. A considerable amount of construction equipment was observed at the field and a materiel dump was at the end of the spur track. According to laborers, the field was to be serviceable by 1 October 1951. Barracks buildings and hangars were also scheduled to be constructed. (2)

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3. On 23 August, a construction worker employed at the field said that the runway was scheduled to be 2,600 meters long and that the concrete used was mixed at a ratio of 1:3. (3) About 2,000 meters of the runway were completed. Clearing of timber was still going on at the northeastern corner of the field. The construction management and many of the workers were quartered in low wooden buildings. (4)

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4. From 3 to 12 August, no discernible changes were observed in the strength of the Soviet tractor brigade employed at the field. The grader previously reported was towed by a tractor. The engine of the tractor was estimated at 80 to 100 HP and had on its radiator a plate enlettered Stalinets. (1)

CLASSIFICATION SECRET

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☐ Declassified
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5. A signboard inscribed "Dauunion East, Klein Machnow, near Berlin" was observed near the construction office. About 300 new workers were employed during the first half of August. The workers at the field were given consecutive numbers in the order of their employment without taking into consideration workers who had in the meantime been discharged or transferred to Aue. The highest number assigned was 3,600. Since about 800 men were discharged the total number of workers presently employed at the field was estimated from 2,800 to 2,900. An EDU group of 30 to 40 students of an east Berlin high school was additionally employed for leveling work on the taxiway for a period of two weeks. This group left on 10 August.
6. Except for a 200-meter stretch, the runway was completed by 11 August. (S) During the reported period, 500 to 600 meters of the taxiway were concreted. The clearing of trees along the eastern approach lane was under way. Stumps were being removed there and the strip was being leveled. Work on the western approach lane had not started. The firm from Torgau which was reported previously had dredged the bottom of Lake Friesen a half a meter by 11 August. The mud was spread out along the southern edge of the runway in a length of about 1,400 meters.
7. During the period from 13 to 26 August, the Soviet tractor brigade still had about 80 air force soldiers. The commanding officer of the unit was Lieutenant Colonel Zuvorov, (fn). In addition to the previous construction equipment a bulldozer type leveling machine was used. This machine was a caterpillar tractor fitted with a blade about 1 meter high and 3 meters wide capable of moving about 4 cubic meters of earth. Small equipment of the brigade was used only on the eastern approach lane. The personnel that could be spared were hauling lumber from the lane. Members of the brigade worked 12 hours a day.
8. After about 300 German workers had been discharged during the reported period about 2,500 laborers remained at the field. By 15 August, the runway's entire length was concreted. Source learned from a schematic diagram seen at the construction office that the runway was scheduled to be 2,500 meters long. According to laborers who worked at the concrete mixing machines cement and gravel were mixed at a ratio of 1:3. The Soviet construction staff complained about the concrete mixture because it was too wet. The construction superintendent was in danger in order to negotiate with the Soviet agency for the payment of construction costs. He stated that expenses amounting 10.5 million DM east had been incurred of which the Soviets were willing to pay only 9 million DM east.
9. Work on the western approach lane had not started. Only about one fifth of the eastern approach lane had been logged off. The firm contracted for the dredging of Lake Friesen was the Hoch und Tiefbau-Gesellschaft (Civil Engineering) in Torgau. A layer of peat 2 meters deep was being excavated from Lake Friesen. This peat together with mud was spread on the eastern and western landing strips in the length of 400 meters each. These strips were to be sodded. The southern section of the circular taxiway on which work was being done at several points was about 60 per cent concreted. The lanes connecting the circular taxiway and the runway, 500 meters from the end of the runway, were about 20 meters wide. No work on lighting facilities, fuel tank installations, or cables were observed.
10. A reservoir for 1,000 persons was being built by a Frankfurt firm. This was to be utilized by the quarters in forest sub-areas (Jagen) 59 and 60. The installing of windows in the three officers' buildings and the construction hut was completed by 22 August. After that the floors were laid. The low wooden buildings quartering the MI and the educational building were being provided with windows. Carpenters said that 3 or 4 more low wooden buildings were to be set up south of the educational building. As of 15 August the Brand-Marschick highway had been blocked by two barriers located immediately east of the level road crossing south of the Brand railroad station and about 200 meters west Lake Friesen respectively.

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[REDACTED] Comments.

- (1) According to available information, the runway at Briesen airfield is to be 2,800 meters long and 80 meters wide.
- (2) From the construction progress, it is inferred that the scheduled completion date for the concrete runway and taxiway will be kept. However, the hangars and quartering buildings will not be completed by that date.
- (3) At fields used by fighter units concrete used for the construction of runways is mixed at a ratio of only 1:5. The mixing ratio of 1:3 as reported by this source is confirmed by another source reporting in paragraph 8. This mixing ratio indicates that the field might be used by heavier aircraft.
- (4) Source refers to information previously supplied by him. See [REDACTED]
- (5) for location of runway and taxiway, see Annex.

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1 Annex: 1 sketch on ditto.

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